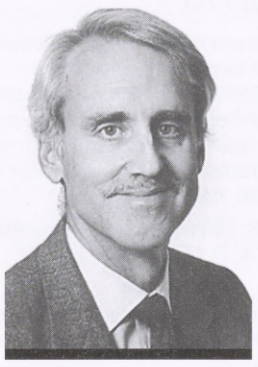
April/May/June 1997 Volume 22, Number 2

A summary of recent news stories from the University of California San Francisco

UCSF

To Our Neighbors

UCSF Stanford Health Care names leaders



Van Etten

Peter Van Etten has been named the president and chief executive officer (CEO) of UCSF Stanford Health Care, which combines the patient care services of both universities.

Bill Kerr has been appointed vice president and chief operating officer and Bruce Wintroub has been named chief medical officer (CMO) of the new nonprofit health care corporation.

The UC Board of Regents, the board of Stanford trustees and the board of Stanford Health Services voted to merge Stanford University Hospital and related clinics; the Lucile Salter Packard Children's Hospital with UCSF medical centers on Parnassus and at Mount Zion last November.

Kerr

Both the CEO and CMO will be part of a new executive committee and will also serve on the academic council, a panel that will assess how UCSF Stanford Health Care supports the schools of medicine at both universities.

The CMO will be the chief physician representative for the new organization. He will chair the UCSF/Stanford physician group and, together with Kerr, will be responsible for organizing and implementing patient services.

Van Etten has been president and chief executive officer of Stanford Health Services (SHS) since 1995, after having helped create SHS, which unified all patient-care operations of Stanford Medical Center. He came to Stanford as the university's chief financial officer in 1991.

Kerr has served as director of the UCSF Medical Center for 19 years and has been active in numerous state and national health service organizations. In 1995, Kerr was elected to the Institute of Medicine and the National Academy of Sciences.

Wintroub

Wintroub served as UCSF's chair of dermatology from 1986 to 1995, as associate dean for UCSF/Mount Zion since 1990, and as executive vice dean from 1995 to the present. His accomplishments include leading the formation of a medical group of faculty and community physicians to develop a UCSF managed care organization called the Integrated Practice Group. This group, committed to developing a successful managed care practice and education program, later merged with the California Pacific Medical Group to form Brown & Toland Medical Group. Wintroub also leads the planning and development activities for the UCSF Cancer Center and sits on the Clinical Services Executive Board, a group which directs strategy for the UCSF Medical Center and the School of Medicine's clinical practices.

In other news, Bruce Schroffel has been appointed to serve as interim director of the UCSF medical centers on Parnassus and at Mount Zion. Schroffel has held the position of director of operations at UCSF for five-and-a-half years and will continue doing that job in his new role.

UCSF begins genetic testing for breast cancer risk

Women who are concerned about hereditary breast cancer may now receive confidential genetic counseling and testing through a new program offered at the UCSF Cancer Center.

Part of a study led by breast cancer specialists Laura Esserman and Debu Tripathy, the program is one of the first in the Bay Area to offer extensive patient counseling and testing for the genes that are linked to inherited breast and ovarian cancer.

Breast cancer is a leading cause of death among American women 40 to 55 years of age. Although the cause of breast cancer is still unknown, genetic factors contribute to at least a portion of the incidence. Scientists discovered multiple genes linked to inherited breast cancer, including the BRCA1 and 2 genes. Women who inherit an altered copy of the genes may have a significant risk of developing cancer.

"There is still much to be learned about the significance of the BRCA1 and 2 mutations," Esserman says. "It must be emphasized that a very small number of women are affected by hereditary breast cancer. There must be a strong familial history of incidence of cancer at a young age."

She adds, "By no means is genetic testing for BRCA1 and 2 considered routine."

The test involves giving a blood sample for analysis, and results are discussed with the patient by a genetics counselor at another session where various options are reviewed. Men who want to know their carrier status may also be eligible for the test.

After identifying women with the genes, Esserman hopes that more treatment options can be developed earlier for them. These options may include preventive surgeries, as well as dietary changes, intervention with MRIs, and entry into clinical trials of new treatments. Patients who are shown to have a change in any of several genes will be more closely screened for ovarian and breast cancer to provide earlier treatment, she emphasizes.

Because genetics testing is not covered by medical insurance, a fund will be developed to allow low-income patients to participate. Costs of the service will include counseling and laboratory testing. Patients who want more information about the program may call 885-7779.

UCSF cancer research center opens

The much-anticipated cancer research building, part of the UCSF Cancer Center, has opened its doors. Investigators will be moving in over the next few months to learn more about the genetic causes of cancer, use new technology to understand how cancer cells differ from normal cells and identify new viruses to kill cancer cells. "The measure of our success will be how we integrate basic research with clinical practices," says Frank McCormick, associate director.

UCSF doctors rank among best

UCSF has the highest number of doctors in Northern California listed in the Pacific region edition of "The Best Doctors in America."

The new 1996-97 regional edition includes nearly 250 UCSF doctors among 4,459 listed from nine Western states. Selection of listings for the regional guide begins by asking doctors to nominate and vote on physicians who have extraordinary clinical expertise.

Doctors in the Pacific regional book represent just over 3 percent of the physicians licensed to practice in the region. They are rated in more than 350 medical specialties and subspecialties, from allergy and pediatrics to oncology and transplantation.

Published by Woodward/White Inc., of Aiken, S.C., the 1996-97 edition can be ordered directly from the publisher at 803/648-0300.

Campus considers Mission Bay as site for second campus

After a two-year review, UCSF expects to recommend the Mission Bay in San Francisco as the location of a major expansion site for 2.65 million square feet of space devoted primarily to biomedical research laboratories.

Along with the recommendation for Mission Bay, the campus will present a financing plan for both the entire site and for the first building to the UC Board of Regents.

UCSF's new Long Range Development Plan, approved by the Regents in January, establishes a goal of developing a major new site as a way to ease overcrowding on the Parnasuss campus and consolidate other satellite sites.

Mission Bay is bounded by Townsend Street on the north, Interstate 280 on the west and Mariposa Street on the south. Owned by the Catellus Development Corporation, Mission Bay encompasses about 313 acres of mostly vacant railyards. Catellus and the City and County of San Francisco are discussing the donation of 43 acres of land at Mission Bay that would make up the UCSF site.

State gets new, improved poison control services

This year, UC launched the new California Poison Control System to provide consistent, high-quality and cost-saving services to all Californians.

The UCSF School of Pharmacy will manage the system, designed so that calls from anywhere in the state will be handled by toxicology specialists trained to respond to calls under uniform guidelines now being developed. Callers now are able to dial a single toll-free number for advice in poisoning emergencies. That new number is 800/876-4766 or 800/8-POISON.

Eventually Californians will have access to more services, such as a new web site and an audiotext library of information about common poisonings.

Mount Zion offers Afrocentric parenting series

Cultural pride, positive communication, discipline and combating violence are among topics being discussed in a new series of free parenting classes for the African-American community offered by the UCSF/Mount Zion Pediatrics Department.

The next round of the eight-class series begins Monday, April 21. Sessions are held Mondays at the Booker T. Washington Community Service Center, 800 Presidio St., San Francisco.

Classes begin at 5:30 p.m. and childcare is provided. For more information and class registration, call at 885-7681.

More news for you
on the back page

What's happening

To Our Neighbo
April/May/June
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events at UC Sa

Special Events

UCSF Founders Day. A banquet and lectures are scheduled for this annual campus event. The faculty research lecture will be delivered by Keith Yamamoto, professor and chair of the department of cellular and molecular pharmacology, Wednesday, April 9, 2 p.m. in Cole Hall. The banquet to honor UCSF Medal winners, which is open to the public, is Thursday, April 10, Westin St. Francis Hotel, 335 Powell St. Tickets are $50. The UC Tanner Lecture on Human Values will be presented by Marian Wright Edelman, president of the Children's Defense Fund, Friday, April 11, 2 p.m., Cole Hall. Satellite broadcasts of these lectures will occur at various UCSF sites. Call 476-4454.

Edelman

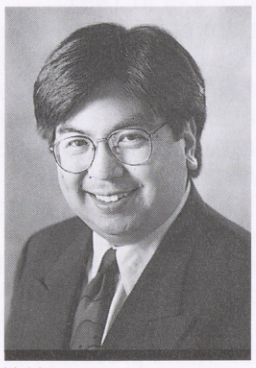
Earth Week. Celebrations are sponsored by the UCSF Water and Energy Awareness Program. Call 476-3257 for more information.

◆ Dan Berman, visiting scholar at UC Berkeley, journalist, environmental activist and co-author of "Who Owns the Sun?" will speak at the Wednesday, April 16 Brown Bag Lecture, 12:10-1 p.m., N 225.

◆ A fair will be held in Millberry Union featuring giant puppets, music, food and conservation products, Friday, April 18, 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.

Take Our Daughters to Work Day. Three lectures have been scheduled in conjunction with this nationally celebrated day that introduces children to various career paths and bolsters interest in academic achievement. Virginia Beane Rutter, member of the teaching faculty at the C.G. Jung Institute, will present ways to strengthen self-esteem in girls, Thursday, April 17, 12:10-1 p.m., Toland Hall. On Tuesday, April 29, Heru-Nefara Amen, program director for the Oakland Men's Project, presents ways parents can rear their sons to become strong and powerful allies for women's equality, 12:10-1 p.m., Toland Hall.

Asian Pacific American Celebration Week. The 10th annual observance of this week at UCSF is sponsored by EMPACT! For information, call 476-6932.


Yaki

◆ Internationally recognized painter and printmaker Mayumi Oda presents slides of her paintings that depict goddesses on Tuesday, May 13, 12:10-1 p.m., Toland Hall.

◆ Michael Yaki, San Francisco Supervisor, speaks on "The Making of a Legislator," Wednesday, May 14, 12:10-1 p.m., N 225.

◆ The Filipino Cultural Festival will be held Thursday, May 15, 12-1 p.m., Millberry Union.

In-line Skating Benefit Show. Kristi Yamaguchi, world champion figure skater, joins professional skaters and celebrities for an in-line skating festival in Golden Gate Park on Sunday, June 22. Proceeds support Yamaguchi's "Always Dream" Foundation and the UCSF Women and Children's Specialty program, which provides care to families affected by HIV/AIDS. Call 334-PARK.

Cirque du Soleil. Canada's premiere circus troupe performs at Jack London Square in Oakland on Saturday, June 21. More than 400 tickets have been secured by the UCSF/Mount Zion Auxiliary, and can be purchased as part of a fundraising effort for patients at UCSF/Mount Zion and in the UCSF Cancer Center. Tickets are $100 each. Call 885-7354.

Entertainment

Cole Hall Cinema. Millberry Arts and Performances shows films Thursday through Saturday in Cole Hall. Prices: $2 to $3.50. Call 476-2542 or search www.ArtsPerf.ucsf.edu for latest films and show times. Movies are subject to change. Films anticipated for spring/summer 1997 include "Microcosmos," "Fargo," "Big Night," and "Marvin's Room."

Annual Vocal Chords Spring Concert. An all student a capella choir performs on Friday, April 11, 8:30 p.m., Millberry Union. Call 476-2542.

The Grand Celebration. UCSF pianists perform at the Laurel Heights Auditorium, Sunday, April 13, 7 p.m. Tickets are $3/5. Call 476-2542.

Parnassus Players. "The Good Woman of Setzuan," a play by Berthold Brecht, will be performed in Toland Hall, on April 25 and 26 and May 2, 3, 4, 9 and 10. For showtimes call 476-2542.

UCSF Orchestra. The orchestra will perform Sunday, May 4, 7:30 p.m., as a benefit concert at Cavalry Presbyterian Church, 2515 Fillmore St. $10. Call 476-5222.

Gospel Choir. Performance is on Saturday, May 17. For time and location, call 476-2542.

AIDS Programs

The UCSF AIDS Health Project (AHP) offers a variety of free support groups for residents of San Francisco. Drop-in groups, monthly disability workshops, social events and meditation and self-help groups also are offered. The Project also provides free individual risk assessments and referrals. For more information, visit the AHP at its new location, 400 Castro St. Call 476-3902 or visit them online at www.ahp.ucsf.edu.

Women's Programs

Events sponsored by the Women's Resource Center, unless otherwise noted. Call 476-5222 to register for workshops and for information on ongoing support groups.

Tuesday, April 8: **Wearing Purple.** A touching collection of letters by four African-American women who have been friends for 40 years will be read by co-author Marilyn Hill Harper, a professor of anesthesia at UCSF, 12:10-1 p.m., Toland Hall.

Wednesday, April 9: **Patently Offensive: Porn Under Siege.** A video and discussion of the recently released movie, "The People vs. Larry Flynt," 12-1:30 p.m., N 217.

Saturday, April 12: **Basic Carpentry.** 9 a.m.-4 p.m., N 417.

Saturday, May 3: **Self-Defense for Women.** A certified rape crisis counselor and a black belt in Kung Fu presents a workshop on street-wise personal safety, 10:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m., in the Millberry Union Fitness Center. $40 for UCSF affiliates, $65 for the public.

Saturday, May 17: **Self-Defense and Assertiveness Skills for Boys and Girls.** For children ages 8 to 12, 1:30-5:30 p.m., Millberry Union Fitness Center.

Tuesday, May 20: **The Transformation of Trauma into Personal Power.** Leona Tockey, a writer, therapist and survivor of incest, talks about her experiences, 12:10 p.m., in N 217.

Please visit our web site at www.ucsf.edu for upcoming events and other information about UCSF. Look for the debut of our online daily, Daybreak, in April for the latest news.

Blood Drive

Donate any weekday, 8 a.m.-7:45 p.m., or Saturday, 9 a.m.-4:30 p.m., at UCSF's Blood Donor Center, Room 131, Long Hospital, 505 Parnassus. For information and appointments, call 476-6989.

Art Exhibits

Proceeds from Hospital Auxiliary exhibits benefit patients and their families. To purchase, call 476-4906.

The works of husband and wife artists **Tom Sexton** and **Georgia Oliva**, watercolorist and oil painter, respectively, will be on display in the Medical Center's Auxiliary Art Gallery through Monday, April 28.

An exhibition of works by San Francisco printmaker **Hideo Chester Yoshida** will be displayed at the Auxiliary gallery from Monday, April 28 through Tuesday, May 27.

Water paintings, photography and stained glass works by **Caroline Mota** will be on display through Friday, May 30 in the Faculty/Alumni House, 745 Parnassus, Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m.

Brown Bag Lectures

UCSF Public Service Programs offers free lectures held weekly at 12:10 p.m. on Wednesdays in Room N 225 (P); monthly on Thursdays in Room 125, UCSF/Mission Center Building (MCB); and monthly on Tuesdays at UCSF/Mount Zion (MZ). Call 476-4394.

April 2: **Kitchen Table Wisdom: Stories That Heal** (P)

April 9: **How to Address the Epidemic of Child Abuse** (P)

April 15: **Safe Sun** (MZ)

April 16: (See Earth Week events.) (P)

April 17: **Diabetes & Oral Health** (MCB)

April 23: **Fibromyalgia and Chronic Muscle Pains: Solving the Mystery!** (P)

April 30: **Emergency Room for the World** (P)

May 7: **When Life Becomes Precious** (P)

May 14: (See Asian Pacific American Celebration week events.) (P)

May 15: **Stroke: An Ounce of Prevention is Worth a Pound of Cure** (MCB)

May 20: **Health Online and the Empowered Medical Consumer** (MZ)

May 21: **Health Online and the Empowered Medical Consumer** (P)

May 28: **Having Surgery? Get Prepared!** (P)

June 4: **Hormones for Life, For Better of for Worse** (P)

June 11: **Healthy International Travel** (P)

June 17: **Is There a Spiritual Crisis in Health Care?** (MZ)

June 18: **Update on Treatment of Eating Disorders** (P)

June 19: **A Father's Day Special** (MCB)

June 25: **Healthy Young Skin** (P)

Institute of Healing Arts & Sciences

The Institute of Healing Arts & Sciences offers talks and workshops on alternatives in health care and healing. Fridays at noon in N 225 (unless otherwise noted). Call 330-5353 for May and June events.

April 11: **Healing Hemophiliac Remedies**

April 16: **Mindfulness Meditation in the Medical Treatment of Stress, Anxiety and Chronic Pain** (N 729, 6:30 p.m.)

April 18: **Aging and Beauty**

April 25: **Healing Circles: Choices for Back Pain**

Brown & Toland Programs

Classes, which are discounted for Brown & Toland Medical Group members, are available at UCSF, Mount Zion and California Pacific Medical Center (CPMC) campuses. All senior classes are free. For more information on senior programs, call 749-4015. For non-senior programs, call 749-4062.

Tuesday April 8: **Earthquake Preparedness.** CPMC, rooms A, B, 3700 California St., 2-4 p.m.

Wednesday, April 9: **Memory Enhancement.** SF Senior Center Aquatic Park, 890 Beach St., 1-2:30 p.m.

Thursdays, April 10 to May 15 and June 5 to July 10: **Art of Movement to Music.** Bothin Auditorium, CPMC, 3700 California St., 9:30-11 a.m.

Thursdays, April 10 to May 15 and June 5 to July 10: **Yoga for Wellness.** Institute for Health and Healing, 2020 Webster St., 9:30-11:30 a.m. (for beginners) and 3-5 p.m. (for intermediates).

Tuesday, April 15: **Cancer Risk Reduction.** Hellman Conference Room, UCSF/Mount Zion, 2200 Post St., 9:30-11:30 a.m.

Wednesday, April 30: **Prostate Awareness and Disease Prevention.** CPMC, rooms A, B, 3700 California St., 9-11 a.m.

Tuesday, May 6: **Arthritis and Pain Management.** CPMC, rooms A, B, 3700 California St., 10 a.m.-12 p.m.

Wednesday, May 14: **Humor and Wellness.** SF Senior Center Aquatic Park, 890 Beach St., 1-2 p.m.

Tuesday, May 20: **Long-Term Care Planning.** Hellman Conference Room, UCSF/Mount Zion, 2200 Post St., 9-11 a.m.

Wednesday, May 21: **Healthwise for Life.** Conference Center, CPMC, 2333 Buchanan St., 1:30-3 p.m.

Wednesday, May 28: **Good Health and Travel.** CPMC, 2333 Buchanan St., 2-4 p.m.

Brown & Toland Managed Care Plans

If you wish to choose a UCSF physician and/or access the UCSF Medical Center, the following managed care plans are accepted by UCSF Brown & Toland physicians. For information on UCSF physicians, call the UCSF Health Connection at 415/885-7777 or the Brown &Toland Medical Group at 1-800-CALL-MDs.

Full Service HMOs

- Blue Shield Access+
- Cigna HMO
- FHP HealthCare HMO
- Foundation Wise Choice HMO
- Health Net HMO
- Maxicare HMO
- Omni HealthCare HMO
- PacifiCare HMO
- Prudential HealthCare

Full Service HMO Senior Plans

- Cigna Senior
- Health Net Seniority Plus
- Prudential HealthCare SeniorCare
- Secure Horizons, a division of PacifiCare
- Shield 65

Point of Service Plans

- Blue Shield HMO Plus POS
- Cigna POS
- FHP POS
- Foundation Health Flexible Choice POS
- Health Net Select POS
- Health Net Elect Exclusive Provider POS
- PacifiCare POS
- Prudential Plus POS

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UCSF Birth Center

The UCSF Birth Center provides a comprehensive spectrum of services for family-planning, maternity and infant care. Along with private birthing suites, the center offers integrated primary care at UCSF's Parnassus, Daly City and BaySpring sites, prenatal care, infertility services and fetal diagnosis and treatment. Great Expectations for Women's Health sponsors classes in labor, birth preparation and parenting and has a library with a wealth of books, tapes and brochures. For more information or to request a private tour of the UCSF Birth Center, call 476-6667. To find a physician specializing in women's health, call 476-0668.

Recreation/ Education

UCSF Millberry Fitness Center. Features ongoing classes in arts, music, language, cooking, meditation, tai chi, and yoga. Call 476-1115 for a catalog of classes.

Health Education Series. Free programs on health care issues of importance to older men and women take place from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at Laurel Heights. Sponsored by the UCSF/Mount Zion Center on Aging, an affiliation of the Goldman Institute on Aging. Call 750-5342 for information.

- Saturday, May 3: **Managing the Aches and Pains of Arthritis**
- Saturday, June 21: **Vision and Hearing: Making Sense of Our Aging Senses**

Outdoors Unlimited. A cooperative resource center for outdoor recreation and adventure rents equipment and offers summer day camps. Register your children 6-14 years old for traveling day camps. Two-week sessions run June 16 through August 29. Call 476-1469.

Mount Zion Community Meetings

Mount Zion holds meetings to keep the community apprised of activities of interest and to listen to neighborhood concerns. Next meeting: Tuesday, April 29. Executive Board Room, 2nd floor, UCSF/Mount Zion, 1600 Divisadero. 7 p.m. Call 476-3206.

Location Key

Cole Hall — 513 Parnassus Ave.

Laurel Heights — 3333 California Ave.

Millberry Union (fitness and conference centers) — 500 Parnassus Ave.

MCB — Mission Center Building, 1855 Folsom St.

UCSF/Mount Zion — 1600 Divisadero

N -School of Nursing, enter at 513 Parnassus Ave.

Outdoors Unlimited — enter beneath UCSF Library, 530 Parnassus Ave.

Toland Hall — 521 Parnassus Ave.

UCSF

University of California San Francisco
Public Affairs
3333 California Street, Suite 103
San Francisco, CA 94143-0462

More than 27,000 patients in the US are waiting for kidney transplants.

The third time was a charm.

Twice before, his body had rejected a transplanted kidney, and DeLeon Wells for a time even considered not trying again. Daily dialysis, to do what his own kidneys could not, was becoming a way of life. Why repeat the anxiety of waiting for an organ, undergo another major surgery, and risk another disappointment, he wondered.

But DeLeon, now 46, felt he was too young and active to rely on a lifetime of dialysis. His work as an independent computer systems administrator kept him constantly on the go, and in the fall of 1994 he opted to go back on the UCSF waiting list for a kidney. It was just more than a year after his body rejected a second transplanted kidney, which lasted more than 2 years but never felt or worked just right. His first, in 1989, failed after only a few days.

Kidneys act as a 24-hour garbage disposal system in the body, pumping about 200 quarts of blood through 140 miles of vessels and filters while ridding the bloodstream of excess water and chemicals. Without this system, toxic wastes build up in the blood, eventually poisoning the body. Some 200,000 people in the US suffer from chronic kidney failure and rely on artificial kidney machines to stay alive.

DeLeon's own kidneys were destroyed by hypertension, or high blood pressure, a disease which runs in his family. The Oakland native's father suffered hypertension and kidney failure before dying of a stroke, and one of his brothers has high blood pressure. The risk of hypertension is 17 times greater for African Americans than for whites. African Americans comprise 12 percent of the US population, but 34 percent of the dialysis population and 30 percent of the national waiting list for kidney transplant candidates, says Peggy Devney, a nurse specialist in the UCSF transplant program who has published studies on organ donation and African Americans. Partly because of a shortage of matching donor organs, African Americans wait twice as long for kidney transplants. And when they do receive transplants, they suffer higher rates of rejection than other racial groups.

Kidneys from living-related donors match and work best, but when those are not available, as in DeLeon's case, patients often must wait for a cadaver donor. But there are not enough cadaver donors for everyone who needs a transplant. More than 27,000 patients are waiting for kidney transplants but only about 11,000 will receive transplants this year, according to the National Kidney Foundation.

DeLeon was aware of these figures in October 1994, when he paid in advance for a year's worth of pager service, essential for waiting-list members whose turn may come at any time of the day or night. Only days later, however, his call came. "The UCSF people found me at the Community Dialysis Center," he says. "They knew exactly where I would be. They didn't even have to beep me."

Doubt briefly entered his mind, DeLeon recalls. "But they told me that 'this kidney is absolutely perfect for you.'" That night, in a three-hour procedure, surgeon Juliet Melzer, a member of UCSF's renowned organ transplant team, which has performed 5,000 kidney transplants, connected the donor kidney to DeLeon's artery and veins on his right side, just between the upper thigh and abdomen. For nine anxious days the kidney was "asleep." "Dr. Melzer kept assuring me that it would be all right," he says. "I've gotten to know her and the people at UCSF so well, and I trusted their confidence." Finally, he urinated, a sure sign that his new kidney had awakened and was working.

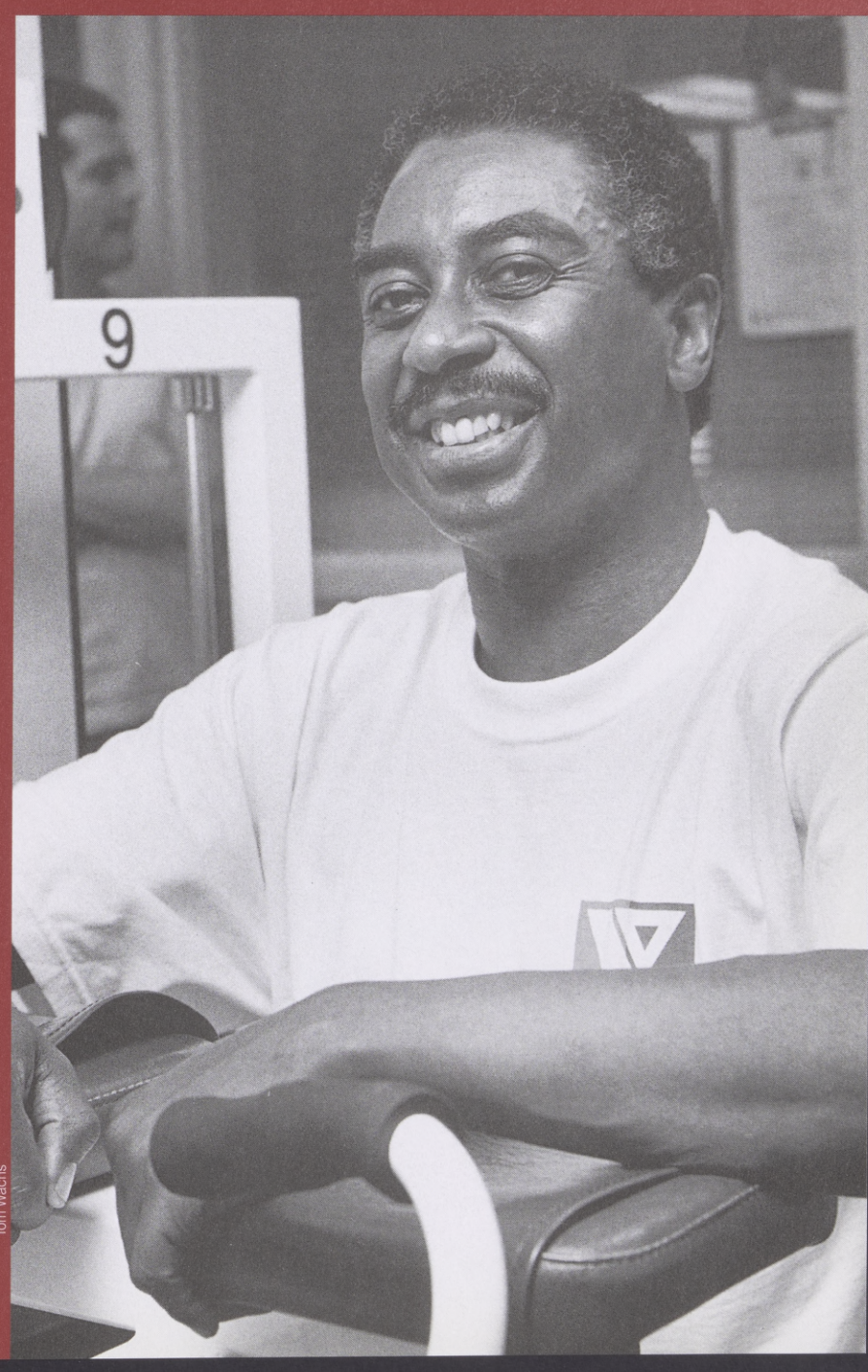
Today more than 2 years later, DeLeon feels he is more healthy than ever. He probably will have to take anti-rejection drugs the rest of his life, but to him that is better than dialysis, diet and other restrictions. Therapists in UCSF's transplant rehabilitation program have developed an exercise and nutrition program that has him in the best shape of his life, he says.

Now DeLeon wants to use his revived energy in other ways. He often visits the transplant unit at UCSF and the Community Dialysis Center, not just to see the staff who have become his friends, but to offer inspiration to potential transplant recipients. More important, he says, he wants to join those like Devney who are working to increase the number of organ donations from African Americans.

"I am healthy today because someone made a decision, under difficult circumstances, to allow the organs of a loved one to be used to save another person," says DeLeon.

—Andy Evangelista

For more information, call the UCSF transplant services, 476-1551, or the California Donor Network, 800/553-6667.



Tom Wachs

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University of California San Francisco
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To Our Neighbors

New asthma device, advice for treatment

UCSF researchers have tested a novel asthma device and helped shape new treatment guidelines that may help both asthma sufferers and their doctors control the disease.

Homer Boushey, chief of the Asthma Clinical Research Center at UCSF and professor of medicine, and Susan Janson, professor of community health systems and medicine, joined with colleagues in NIH-supported research to evaluate a new inhalation device that both records and regulates the amount of asthma drug inhaled by patients.

The SmartMist device ensures that the doctor will know if the patient actually took the medication as often as prescribed and used the correct technique. The device thus enables physicians and researchers to determine if the treatment they are testing actually works.

Both Boushey and Janson also were part of a panel that developed national guidelines for asthma treatment. "It has become clear that many of the deaths from asthma occur from sudden, severe attacks, so the panel has emphasized the importance of early recognition and early treatment of attacks," Boushey says.

Among the panel's new recommendations are: a stepwise approach to using asthma medications and a greater focus on teaching asthma self-management and prevention to patients.

"Adherence to asthma treatment plans depends on open communication between patient and physician and an individualized approach," Janson says. "There needs to be a renewed emphasis on evaluating outcomes from the perspective of the patient's quality of life and ability to engage in usual daily activities."

Asthma has increased dramatically over the past 20 years, especially in developed Western countries, Boushey adds. Many new asthma treatments are under development and will need to be tested in the next 10 to 20 years. Devices such as SmartMist have a great potential for teaching people correct techniques for using inhalers, he says.

Brad Foss

Practicing the 'art' of medicine

Belinda Fu, a first-year medical student, plays a waltz to the delight of Boris Piatigorfki, a stroke patient at UCSF/Mount Zion. Fu participates in an elective course sponsored by the Art for Recovery program in which students develop relationships with patients as they help them express their creativity as part of the healing process.

Parkinson's disease study

UCSF is participating in a national study to explore genetic factors related to Parkinson's disease with the hope of finding more effective therapies. Researchers are looking for families with at least two people who have or had the disease to answer questions about their family/medical history, take a short neurologic exam and have blood drawn. For more information, call 476-9276.

HIV Prevention research

Researchers at the UCSF Center for AIDS Prevention Studies are examining how gay men living with HIV are coping with stresses of the epidemic. Eligibility requirements include, gay HIV-positive men with a CD4 count of more than 100 cells per milliliter, who are at least 21. Call 597-9169 for more information.

Researchers also are seeking participants for a study to find effective ways to prevent HIV transmission among couples with one HIV-positive partner. Researchers will follow participants for one year, conducting interviews, free laboratory tests and counseling. Participants will be paid. For more information, call 800/262-2430.

Leg muscle fatigue study

Researchers in the department of radiology are looking for men and women ages 30 to 85 to participate in a study of leg muscle fatigue at the VA Medical Center. The study can be completed in two visits and volunteers will be paid. To qualify, participants should be nonsmokers, free from heart disease, high blood presure, diabetes or any major illness and should be sedentary. For more information, call 750-2158.